

strongly that we need to pass a bill. We will head into the winter with severe dislocations between supply and demand of natural gas. Natural gas prices will increase dramatically. They are already on the rise. That is going to be exacerbated in the coming months. Coming from a northern State where natural gas is a pretty important commodity to us in the cold, with our hard winter climates, this will be a very important issue. We are not going to be able to fix that in the Energy bill in the short run. But we need to tell the American people we have set in place policies that help resolve these issues for the long term and intermediate term. I hope we are able to do that.

I ask the chairman, if I may, I had hoped to be able to make a presentation on the issue of trade. If there are others wishing to speak on energy, I will defer. If not, I would like to proceed perhaps to make the statement on trade, understanding that if Members with amendments are coming back to the floor, they could interrupt me, and I will relinquish the floor so they can clear the amendments. If that is satisfactory to the chairman, I will proceed in that manner.

Mr. DOMENICI. How long might the Senator speak on this issue?

Mr. DORGAN. About 20 minutes, I would guess.

Mr. DOMENICI. We are trying to work out about 5 or 10 amendments. If we get them ready, we will call it to his attention on the bill before us. In the meantime, I am going to have no objection to his proceeding to discuss trade as in morning business.

I ask the Senator if he would permit the distinguished Senator from Idaho, Mr. CRAIG, to speak for a couple of minutes on the issue we have just been speaking on, to wit, the House action with reference to the supplemental. When he yields, I will have no objection to the Senator from North Dakota following him, subject to the understanding that if we need to interrupt him, of course, doing it in an appropriate way, to bring in the amendments, the Senator will have no objection.

Mr. DORGAN. That will be fine. I will relinquish the floor to my colleague from Idaho.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for giving me a moment of time to address the stopgap supplemental funding bill that has just come back from the House. I come to the floor as frustrated as the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator STEVENS, who spoke to the issue a few moments ago. Senator DOMENICI spoke, as did Senator BURNS of Montana.

It was 100 degrees in Idaho yesterday. For Idaho, that is hot. It has been that way for 3 weeks. We have dried up. We now have forest fires burning, with literally thousands of acres ablaze. We just lost two people in a wildfire in the

middle of the week. Idaho, Montana, Nevada, eastern Washington, Oregon—all of us are afire at this moment.

The supplemental money we put in for the Forest Service and for wildfires, which the House took out, was to replenish last year's accounts from which we had borrowed to fight last year's fires. The accounts we borrowed from were the very accounts that would allow people to go out on the ground for the purpose of rehabilitation, for doing the kinds of things necessary to begin to environmentally improve the land, the 7.5 million acres that burned last year in a phenomenal wildfire scenario.

We are deeply into that already this year. Fires have burned extensively in Arizona, and as the heat has moved up the Great Basin States, along the Rocky Mountain ridge, of course, these fires now continue.

Why the House has done this, I am not quite sure. They say there is plenty of money. There is not because the money was borrowed from the accounts of other areas within the Forest Service. That is a standard practice we have done in the past. But the problem is, by doing what the House did, we are not replenishing the accounts of last year that we borrowed from. We have always done that on a historical basis because one cannot measure or estimate how extensive a fire season will be, how many acres will burn, how many people will be employed. We have literally thousands of people in Idaho right now on the fire lines, as is true in other States in the West, and helicopters are flying, aerial bombers are flying, at this moment.

A phenomenally large number of people are employed to stop the fires, protect the environment, and try to save the habitat, the wildlife and, in many instances, houses, private property, homes that are built up and within the forests of our country, up to and within the forests of our country. We are obviously going to have to address this in an emergency environment.

I am extremely disappointed with what the House has done. I have talked with the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture who heads up the Forest Service, and the chief, and they are just a week away from having to again start borrowing out of the accounts that have not yet been replenished. So their capacity to pay back until we obviously appropriate is limited.

We will continue to fight the fires. The fires will be fought. It is the rehabilitation, it is the restoration, that is funded by other accounts that will largely be denied.

FREE TRADE

Mr. CRAIG. Turning to the Senator from North Dakota, I thank him for the time he has allotted me. I think he is going to be talking about trade and possibly the Singapore and the Chilean free-trade agreements. The Senator and I worked cooperatively together on

a lot of trade issues, and cochair a caucus on the Hill.

The Senator who is in the chair at this moment is as frustrated as I am about these current free-trade agreements in front of us, because our trade ambassador has stepped into an arena that is frankly none of his business, if I can be so blunt, and that is immigration law. I think the Senator from North Dakota is as frustrated by that as I am. The Senator from Alabama, Mr. SESSIONS, has crafted a sense of the Senate I am looking at that will speak very boldly to the fact that if the trade ambassador wants to send up other free-trade agreements—Senator SESSIONS and I serve on the Judiciary Committee, we will be blunt about it—we are not going to let them out.

This ambassador is an appointed person, not an elected person. He does not have the right to go in and write immigration law. That is not his prerogative. If he has to discuss it, if he wants it to become a part of a trade agreement, then he must tell foreign countries he will offer legislation to Congress to review for the purposes of adjusting trade law, if necessary, where it fits and where a majority of the Congress can and will support it.

The two trade agreements that are in front of us are very frustrating to this Senator because I think we have a trade ambassador who has overstepped his authority and I think it is time we tell him that in as clear language as we possibly can.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

FREE TRADE IMBALANCES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, my colleague from Idaho has described accurately the provision in the free-trade agreement dealing with immigration.

But I must say, and he will agree with me, I am sure, that a sense-of-the-Senate resolution that says, in effect, you better watch it, is the equivalent of hitting someone on the forehead with a feather.

The reason there has to be a sense-of-the-Senate resolution at the moment, if we are to express displeasure, is because we cannot offer any amendments to a free-trade agreement. It is brought to the floor under fast track. This Senate, in its wisdom—or in its lack of wisdom—said we agree to put our arms in a straitjacket so whatever the trade ambassador negotiates anywhere in the world, he can bring it back here and we agree to prevent ourselves from offering amendments. That is fast track.

I do not have any big issues with Chile or Singapore. The free-trade agreement coming to the Senate floor is not even a very big deal with respect to Chile and Singapore, the two countries with whom the agreements are made. The big deal to me is that we have made agreement after agreement in international trade. In each case, this country has lost, and lost big time.